186 668 weakening of the Russian control which resulted from Russia's defeat by Japan; the revolution which spread throughout the Empire in 1905 had its repercussions in the Baltic Provinces. In Latvia and Estonia there were peasant risings which developed into *jacqueries* of a peculiarly savage character; harvests were burnt, agricultural machines were destroyed, and considerable damage was done to the large German-Balt and ecclesiastical estates. In Latvia the rising was not only the work of the peasantry, but also of the Social-Democratic party and of a nationalist revolutionary movement known as the *Savieniba*. Petitions were addressed to the Russian Government for universal franchise, freedom of the press and of assembly, the right to teach Lettish in the schools, &c.; and a [665] Provisional Revolutionary Government was established in Riga. In Lithuania two congresses were summoned to meet simultaneously in Vilna on December 4, 1905; one, consisting of representatives of all the Lithuanian associations, elected Dr. Basanavicius as its president, and voted a resolution demanding the creation of an autonomous Lithuania within ethnographic limits. The other, a congress of the Peasant Union which had been founded by a certain Gabrys, decided not to pay any taxes, to dismiss Russian teachers and pro-Russian municipal authorities, and to establish Lithuanian courts.

661 The disturbances were finally suppressed with the utmost ruthlessness by Russian troops, with the assistance of the German Barons; 3,000 Letts were said to have been tried by court martial, about half their number being sentenced to death. The promises made by the Tsar in the stress of the emergency were not kept, or kept only in part, although each of the Provinces was allowed to send representatives to the Russian Duma which was now brought into existence. [167] Under the Stolypin Government severe measures of repression were introduced; many of the nationalist leaders, such as Karl Ulmanis in Latvia and Konstantin Paets in Estonia, were driven into exile, and a system of colonization was introduced with the object of encouraging a German 'non-native' class of small-holders which would [186] tend to support the *status quo*. None the less, in spite of the Russian Government's repressive policy, the national spirit which had failed to carry the day in 1905 survived, in one form or another, until the world upheaval in 1914 provided the occasion for a fresh outburst of activity.

II. THE WORLD WAR AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE INDEPENDENT STATES

726 Four factors contributed to the making of the new Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania during the World War: the fall of the Russian Empire; the German occupation of the border provinces

000 requirements of the religious organization to which the student belonged.

665 648 The clerical Christian-Democratic party in Lithuania, which was also a nationalist and agrarian group, has played a far more important part in political life than its Lutheran counterparts in Latvia and Estonia; indeed, it was the dominant partner in every Government during the parliamentary phase, except for the short-lived Populist-Socialist Cabinet of June–December 1926. In spite of this fact, relations with the Vatican were for a long time extremely acrimonious, largely as a result of the Concordat concluded in 1925 between Poland and the Vatican, whereby the latter recognized the Vilna district as a Polish diocese. Popular indignation at the failure of the Government to change this situation was exploited by the Opposition in the elections of 1926 to secure the defeat of the Christian-Democrats, who, however, supported the Voldemaras Government formed in the following December. A Concordat was eventually negotiated in September 1927, whereby the limits of the ecclesiastical province of [793] Lithuania were to coincide with the existing frontiers; bishops were [794] to be nominated by the Holy See, subject to the approval of the President of the Republic; although religious education was compulsory in all State schools, Catholic Churches might have their own schools, supported by the State.

659 648 In the autumn of 1930 there was a recrudescence of hostility when the Government suppressed the Catholic Youth Organization, on the ground that the Church was encouraging political propaganda against the Government, and arrested a number of Christian-Democratic leaders. An exchange of Notes between the Vatican and the Government, followed by a visit of the Papal-Legate, Mgr. Bartolini, to Rome in January 1931, failed to lead to a reconciliation, and in June Mgr. Bartolini was virtually turned out of the country. Relations improved somewhat after the appointment of Mgr. Faidutti as Papal Chargé d'Affaires in August; but up till now no general measure of agreement has been reached, and the Government has succeeded in getting the upper hand in its struggle with the Christian-Democratic party, which was suppressed in 1935. The new Constitution adopted in February 1938, which provides for the introduction of civil marriage and deprives the Church of its autonomy, has aroused considerable opposition in clerical circles.

4. Education[1]

872 Under the Russian régime primary education in the Estonian and Latvian Provinces reached a fairly high level; in 1886, 98 per cent.

[1] For statistics relating to the number and types of schools in the three countries, see footnotes on pp. 31, 34, and 38 above.

A specified number of citizens could propose a new law, or demand the amendment or abrogation of an old one: in Lithuania, if such a proposal were rejected or amended by the *Seimas*, the matter ended there; but in Estonia and Latvia the issue was then referred to a plebiscite, while in Estonia a popular verdict contradicting that of the Legislature resulted in the automatic dissolution of the latter. Moreover, in Estonia and Latvia the promulgation of any law could, at the request of one-third of the Legislature, or in the case of Latvia on the President's own initiative, be postponed for two months, during which period a sufficient number of citizens might demand its submission to a referendum. Exemption from such submission was extended, however, in both countries to certain matters, such as the budget or other financial measures, foreign treaties, the declaration of war and peace, or of a state of emergency, &c., and in Latvia to any law which had been declared urgent by a two-thirds majority or passed a second time by a three-fourths majority of the *Saeima*. A referendum was automatically required in Estonia on all constitutional changes, but in Latvia only where the most fundamental clauses were in question. In Lithuania constitutional amendments could be proposed by the *Seimas* or the Executive, or by 50,000 citizens; but, unless a referendum was demanded by the President, or by a fraction of the electorate or of the *Seimas*, a three-fifths majority vote of the latter was sufficient for their adoption.

It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that democratic institutions, as operated during a period of parliamentary government lasting from 1922 to 1926 in Lithuania, and from 1920 to 1934 in Latvia and Estonia, never functioned properly, from the time of their inception until their abrogation. The political inexperience, the individualism, and in some cases even corruption, of the party politicians —particularly in Lithuania—made them unfitted for what is, after all, the most difficult of all forms of government. Moreover, the system of proportional voting for party lists helped to encourage the growth of an absurdly large number of parties—in Latvia no fewer than twenty-eight were returned at the elections of 1925—whose members frequently represented individual interests rather than political principles, and had little contact with, and less responsibility to, the electorate. This in turn made for the weakness and instability of the Governments—between 1920 and 1934 there were eighteen Cabinets in Estonia and sixteen in Latvia; they tended, especially in Estonia, to become merely executive committees at the mercy of a heterogeneous and undisciplined Parliament. Every Cabinet had to be a coalition; if a broad one, it usually lacked constructive power; if a narrow one, it could not rely on a majority; and the negotiations

642 necessary for its formation led to the frequent prolongation of political crises by interminable party bargaining.

565 665 It is important to bear in mind that the vast majority of the inhabitants of these countries are, and have always been, peasants. Under the Tsarist régime they were ardently nationalist, and, as long as the supremacy of the Baltic Barons endured, there was also a marked tendency to Socialism. After the establishment of independence, the agrarian reforms energetically prosecuted by all three States brought into existence a large new class of small peasant proprietors, and land-hunger, the chief incentive to revolution, was virtually abolished. The Agrarian parties grew steadily stronger at the expense of the Socialists and Centre groups,[1] while Communism —now that it was associated with Soviet Russia and all that Russian domination might involve—became practically extinct as a significant force.

Given, on the one hand, the state of parliamentary atrophy described above, with its probable accentuation of the economic and financial difficulties of the period, and, on the other hand, the increasing predominance of the Agrarian parties, influenced possibly by the success of the Pilsudski *coup* in May 1926 and the German National-Socialist victory in 1933, an outside observer might be tempted to describe what has happened in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania as a victory, in each case, of the peasant parties over 642 the Socialists, or of Fascism over parliamentary anarchy. Each of 186 the dictatorships, it is true, depends largely on the prestige of one 178 or two veteran statesmen, on the loyalty of the Army, and on the tacit acquiescence of the mass of the peasantry. It is also true, perhaps, that in each country an anti-foreign and anti-Semitic agrarian nationalism is becoming more and more pronounced, and, furthermore, that there is a common tendency on the part of the responsible leaders to favour the introduction of corporative institutions—although how far such an innovation would be likely to modify the existing concentration of powers it is as yet too soon to judge. But it would be misleading to stress the parallelism between the three States too much, or to conclude that the present authoritarian régimes employ the same methods and operate in the same interests in every case.

642 In Estonia, the Agrarian dictatorship of M. Pacts was the last stage 578 of a race between the parliamentary groups and the extra-parliamentary and semi-Fascist organization, known as the 'Liberators'

[1] In Lithuania the strength of the Socialists never exceeded 17 per cent. of the whole *Seimas*; but in the other two countries the Left groups, although they were at first numerically stronger than the Agrarian parties and had played a prominent part in framing the Constitutions, participated in a quite disproportionately small number of Governments, and diminished in strength fairly steadily in successive elections.

League', to impose on the country their rival brands of constitutional reform; whereas in Latvia the protagonists were, on the one hand, the Agrarian party—itself accused of Fascism—with proposals for reform, and, on the other, the Socialists with an anti-Fascist but otherwise unconstructive programme. Moreover, the dictatorship in Estonia has operated more mildly, and departed less radically from constitutional principles, than its counterpart in Latvia. 642 578

Lithuania, again, had problems peculiar to herself. Here a religious issue cut across the straight fight between Nationalist-Agrarian and Socialist. Lithuanian nationalism demanded the restoration of Vilna; but the Vatican had recognized that province as a Polish diocese. The Christian-Democrats, who were as much a clerical as an agrarian or nationalist party, were therefore divided between two loyalties. The *coup d'état* of 1926 was executed by a group of officers in favour of the Nationalist party—a small Conservative group of landowners and industrialists—at a time when the Populists and Socialists were in office; the Christian-Democrats at first supported the Voldemaras dictatorship, owing largely to prolonged ill-feeling between the Nationalist Government and the Vatican, but they ended by going into permanent opposition, and under the Tubelis Administration were suppressed altogether. More recently the Memel dispute gave rise to some discontent, this time among the peasants, among whom there was a feeling that their interest in good trade relations with Germany was being sacrificed to a policy of extreme nationalism. None the less, the dictatorship has continued for nearly eleven years, and is only now beginning to show signs of modification; presumably, the pressing need for national unity, imposed first by the Vilna dispute and later by the Memel controversy, must be counted as the primary cause of the prolonged supremacy of a régime which appears to rest not so much—as in Estonia and Latvia—on its power to satisfy the needs of an important agricultural class, as on the support of the Army, the ability of a small group of intellectuals, and the immense personal prestige of President Smetona. 642 578 186

2. Estonia

Political Parties. The table of election results below[1] shows a striking shift of numerical strength from the Left and Centre parties to the Right, which consisted of the Agrarian party, or Peasants' Union, reinforced after 1923 by the New Farmers or 'Settlers'. These were the representatives of the new class of peasant proprietors created by the agrarian reforms, and became, in 1932, the left wing of a United Agrarian party. 665 [525]

The Agrarian party consisted chiefly of farmers who had owned

[1] See Table 8 at foot of next page.

1: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1938 RB1 Baltic States RB1
Estonia

land before the agrarian reforms; its programme included the defence of private property and enterprise, the creation of small properties from State reserves to satisfy the needs of the landless classes, and the subsidization and protection of agriculture by the State. Its leaders included M. Konstantin Paets, now President of the State and Dictator, Generals Laidoner and Soots, and MM. Teemant and Eenpalu (formerly Einbund). The Agrarians took part in all but three of the twenty coalition Governments between 1919 and 1934,[1] while the New Farmers, after their first appearance in 1926 in M. Teemant's Government, were only once excluded from office.

The two major groups of the Centre were the Labour and Populist parties. The **Labour party** was formed as the result of an amalgamation of two moderately radical parties which had appeared in the National Council of 1918,—the Radical Socialists led by MM. Wilms and Strandman, and the Social Travaillists led by MM. Püp and Seljamaa. It represented the liberal but non-socialist intelligentsia

[1] M. Paets was five times President of the Council (in 1921, 1923, 1931, 1932, and 1933); M. Teemant four times (1925, 1926, 1927, and 1932), and M. Eenpalu once (1932).

TABLE 8. *Estonian Election Results, 1919–34.*

Parties	*First Constituent Assembly 1919–20*	*State Assemblies*				
		1920–3	*1923–6*	*1926–9*	*1929–32*	*1933–4*
Right:						
Agrarian	8	21	23	23	24	United Agrarian Party 42
Settlers (New Farmers)	..	..	4	14	14	
Centre:						
House owners	..	1	2	2	3	National Middle Party 23
Christian-Democrats	4	7	8	5	4	
Populists (Estonian Nationalists)	25	10	8	8	9	
Labour	30	22	12	13	10	
National Liberals	..	..	4	..	..	..
Ex-service men	..	..	1	..	..	..
Small landholders	..	..	1	..	..	..
Minorities:						
Russian	1	1	4	3	2	5
German	3	4	3	2	2	3
Swedish	1	..	..	..	1	
Left:						
Socialists (Social-Democrats)	41	18	15	24	25	22
Independent Socialists (Socialist Revolutionaries)	7	11	5	..	..	..
Communists	..	5	10	..	..	..
Workers	..	..	..	6	6	5

It represented the liberal but non-socialist intelligentsia 665 ●
and working classes, the artisans and commercial and government [625]
employees, and stood for a radical programme of social and agrarian reform. Its most valuable function was to hold the balance between the Agrarians and Social-Democrats, and during the whole course of the constitutional period it was only excluded from the Government on four occasions.[1] The **Populist party**, earlier known as the National Democratic Party, stood rather more to the Right, representing the bourgeois intellectuals and professional and business interests, and had its origin in the nationalist cultural movement under the Tsarist régime, and later, in the fusion of the Estonian Democrats and Radical Democrats in the National Council of 1918. It was represented in all but three Governments.[2]

The **Christian-Democrats**, or Christian-Nationalists, formed a smaller group whose chief concern was the defence of religious (Lutheran) and clerical interests. In social matters they followed the Right group at first, but gradually inclined towards the Centre. They participated in the majority of Cabinets after 1921, and their leader, Dr. Akel, was President of the Council in 1924, and Foreign Minister for a time under the dictatorship. Largely on account of the system of proportional representation, the Centre groups went through a phase of disintegration, especially between 1923 and 1926; the elections of 1932, however, saw a rally towards concentration, with the amalgamation of the Populists, the Labour party, Christian-Democrats, and House Owners into a single National Middle Party.

The only important group on the Left was the **Social-Democratic party**, led by MM. Rei and Martna, which was affiliated with the Second International, represented the interests of the working classes and trade unions, and stood for a moderate programme of State socialization of industry. In spite of their parliamentary strength, the Social-Democrats only took part in six Governments between 1919 and 1934,[3] and the only occasion on which a Socialist held the office of President of the Council was in 1928, when M. Rei formed a coalition of Socialists, Christian-Democrats, New Farmers, and the Labour party.

The most radical group in the Constituent Assembly had been that of the seven Socialist Revolutionaries, which, by the first *Riigikogu*, had split up into the **Independent Socialist party** and the **Communists** proper. In the 1926 elections no Independent Socialists were returned, but their more radical members, who had broken away

[1] M. Strandman was twice President of the Council (in 1919 and 1929); M. Pilp once (in 1920), and M. Kukk (1922). 643

[2] M. Tõnisson was three times President of the Council (in 1919, 1927, and 1933), and M. Jaakson once (1924).

[3] i.e. twice in 1919, and in 1924, 1928, 1931, and 1932.

1 [The Labour Party in Estonia -- Analyst]

1: Anonymus 4-4(no date)1938 RB1 Baltic States RB1 Estonia

665 and formed the Workers' Party, or 'Kaaver-Socialist' group, secured
[196] six seats. In 1930 this group was dissolved and its seats distributed among the other parties, while the Communist party had already been declared illegal after a *putsch* engineered from Moscow in December 1924. The solidarity of the nation against Communism was illustrated by the energetic suppression of this *putsch* by General Laidoner, and the formation of a grand coalition of all the major parties, including the Social-Democrats, under Dr. Jaakson. Martial law, which had been proclaimed throughout the country, was thereafter retained permanently in certain frontier zones and on all railways; and, although during the following years plots were from time to time discovered, Communism never again got out of hand to the extent of being a national danger.

642 *Constitutional Reform.* As early as 1924 the question of constitutional revision was raised by Dr. Jaakson in his Ministerial Declaration immediately after the Communist *putsch*, when he suggested the desirability of separating the functions of the President of the State from those of the Prime Minister. Bills to that effect were unsuccessfully introduced in the Assembly by the parties of the Right in February 1925 and July 1926, while the Labour party tabled a
[666] separate Bill in 1926 for halving the number of deputies in the Assembly; in the same year the Assembly actually adopted a modification of the electoral law, requiring a deposit from every candidate and a minimum of two successful candidates for representation of any group in the Assembly.

668 The year 1930 saw the genesis of a speedily repressed peasant
672 'Lapuan' movement in South Estonia, somewhat on the lines of its Finnish prototype, but without the latter's anti-Communist character. This organization expressed its dissatisfaction with parliamentary 'absolutism', talked of a march on Tallinn, and proposed to petition for the reduction of the number of deputies and the diminution of their salaries. A far more important movement was set on foot in March 1931 by the Ex-service Men's Federation, which passed a resolution demanding the institution of a President of the State with extensive powers, an electoral system which allowed for votes for individuals instead of for lists, and the reduction of the number of deputies, with the threat that, if the Government did not accede to these requests within three months, the Federation would proceed to a popular referendum.

578 There now began a three-cornered struggle between the Agrarian
642 and Centre parliamentary groups, which favoured moderate reform; the Ex-servicemen—henceforth known as the 'Liberators'—who demanded far wider powers for the President of State than the former were willing to concede; and the Social-Democrats, who were opposed

642 leaders (not including General Larka) were arrested.[1] The presidential
661 and parliamentary elections were postponed until the end of the state of emergency, which was itself prolonged in September for another year.

642 Some attempt to adhere to constitutional procedure was made, however, in October 1934, when an extraordinary session of the *Riigikogu* was summoned; but, in view of the recalcitrant attitude of the majority of the representatives, it was immediately prorogued, and in January 1935 President Paets announced the Government's
[478] intention of replacing the new Constitution by a system of corporative representation. A beginning was made in the following March with the creation of an Economic Council, ten of whose members were to be appointed by the President, while the remaining fifteen
●[665] would be elected by the Chambers of Commerce. At the same time the single-party system was introduced, with the foundation of a Patriotic party under the direction of the Chief of Propaganda.
646 Finally, on January 8, 1936, a Bill empowering the Government to summon a Constituent Assembly was submitted to a referendum and approved by 474,218 votes to 148,824. This Bill provided that the Assembly, which was to adhere to republican and democratic principles, should consist of two Chambers: the first composed of eighty members elected by direct, universal, equal, and secret suffrage on the principle of personal election; the second of forty members, ten of whom would be appointed by the President and the remainder by the various public bodies.[2]

While the results of the elections to this Assembly, which were held in December 1936, have not been published, it is understood that little more than half the electorate voted, and that in fifty of the eighty constituencies only one candidate was presented for election, while, although some Opposition leaders were returned in the remaining thirty, even here the majority of seats fell to Government nominees. Moreover, the restrictive precautions taken during the electoral campaign were such as to evoke a manifesto in the Finnish press by four former party leaders, MM. Tõnisson, Piip, Kukk, and Teemant.

642 The National Assembly met on February 18, 1937, and was dissolved on August 17, after adopting the final draft of the constitutional law presented for their consideration by the Government. Its main provisions are as follows:

642 The President is elected for six years, by direct, universal, and
646 secret suffrage; the National Assembly consists of a Chamber of

[1] An attempted *coup* planned by the Liberators in December 1935 was forestalled by the arrest of General Larka and other leaders, and was punished by the infliction of severe sentences on some 148 prisoners, in May 1936. About half of the latter, including General Larka, have since been amnestied.

[2] e.g. by the Courts of Justice, local government bodies, corporations, churches, cultural boards of minorities, the Civil Guard, &c.

Deputies and a National Council, the first being composed of 48 642
members elected by secret and universal suffrage on the basis of [646]
majority voting, and the second of 40 members—10 of whom are nominees of the President, and the remaining 30 representatives of the corporations, municipalities, and public institutions; the age qualification of voters is 22 years, of deputies 25 years, and of members of the National Council 40 years. The right to initiate legislation belongs to the Government with the President's cognizance, or to one-fifth of the Chamber of Deputies; measures relating to national defence, however, can only be proposed by the Government, while their consent is necessary for the introduction of fiscal measures by the Chamber of Deputies. Legislation rejected by the National Council requires for its option a three-fifths majority vote of the total number of deputies in the first Chamber. The President [643]
has the right of dissolution and suspensive veto, and the power to govern by decree between parliamentary sessions; he appoints and dismisses the Government, and, in the event of a vote of no confidence by the Chamber of Deputies, he may either dismiss the Government or order new elections; his acts must be countersigned by the Prime Minister and the competent Minister, and he may be impeached before the State Court; with the consent of the Chamber of Deputies he can submit any measure to a national referendum. Constitutional amendments may be proposed either by the President or by a majority of either of the two Chambers, and, in the event of the National Assembly's rejection of such a proposal made by the President, the latter may submit it to a referendum. Provision is made for legislation setting up autonomous professional corporations; freedom of conscience and religion are guaranteed, and there is no State Church; national minorities are permitted to establish autonomous institutions for cultural purposes and social assistance; instruction in their schools is to be conducted in their own language and in that of the State. The Constitution came into force on January 1, 1938, and elections [645]
to the new Chamber of Deputies took place on February 24–5, when the Patriotic Front gained fifty-five out of the eighty seats. No other parties were permitted, but several of the former party leaders, including MM. Piip and Tõnisson, were returned. On April 24, 1938, M. Paets, by 219 votes to 19, was elected the first State President under the new Constitution.

3. Latvia

Political Parties. Five main groups are shown in the table below:[1] 665 ●
the Agrarians; the Right, Centre, and National Minority groups, one

[1] See Table 9 on next page.

1: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1938 RB1 Baltic States RB1
Latvia

●665

TABLE 9. *Latvian Election Results, 1922–34*

Parties	*1st Saeima 1922–5*	*2nd Saeima 1925–8*	*3rd Saeima 1928–31*	*4th Saeima 1931–4*
Left:				
Social-Democrats	30	31	25	20
Latgalian Social-Democrats	..	1	1	..
Socialist Jewish "Bund"	1	1	1	..
Independent Social-Democrats	..	..	1	1
Right Social-Democrats	7	4	2	..
Peasant and Labour Group	..	..	6	7
	— 38	— 37	— 36	— 28
Centre				
Democratic Centre	6	3	3	6
Labour Union	..	..	1	1
Progressive Union	..	..	..	3
Economic Union	..	..	1	1
Radical Democrats	..	1	..	..
Non-Party Latgalians	..	1	..	..
Young Farmers	3	3	..	..
Christian Labour	..	..	1	..
Latgalian Progressives	4	2	3	2
	— 13	— 10	— 9	— 13
Agrarian Group:				
Peasant Union	16	16	16	14
New Farmers and Smallholders	..	3	4	9
Latgalian Christian Farmers	3	5	6	8
Latgalian Progressive Farmers	4	2	3	3
Devastated Areas	1	1	..	..
Latgalian Independent Farmers	..	1	..	..
Semgalian Christian Farmers	1	..	..	..
	— 25	— 28	— 29	— 34
Right.				
Christian Union	..	..	..	6
National Union	4	3	2	..
Christian Nationalists	4	2	4	..
Party for Peace and Order	..	1	1	1
Latgalian Union	1	2	1	..
National Farmers	..	1	..	..
New Peasants' Union	..	..	..	1
	— 9	— 9	— 8	— 8
Minorities:				
Russians:				
Old Believers	1	2	2	2
Orthodox Workers	..	2	2	2
Officials in Latvian Municipalities	1	1	2	1
Peasant Union	..	..	..	1
National Democrats	1	..	..	..
Germans	6	5	6	6
Jews:				
Agudas Israel	2	2	1	2
Misrachi	2	1	2	1
Ceire Zion	1	1	1	..
Poles	1	2	2	2
	— 15	— 16	— 18	— 17
Total	100	100	100	100

or more of which were always to be found supporting the Agrarian Coalition Governments; and the Left Wing. The phenomenal number of parties in Latvia is accounted for in part by the fact that the Province of Latgale was equipped with a complete set of parties of its own, partly, too, by subdivision among the minority groups. 665

Here, even more than in Estonia, political life was dominated by the Agrarian parties, the most important of which were: the **Peasant Union**, which was founded in 1917, in nationalist and democratic opposition to the German-Balt landowners, and which represented the same class of well-to-do farmers, and stood for the same programme of land reform and agricultural protection, as did the Estonian Agrarian party; the **New Farmers**, led by M. Blodnieks, representing the new peasant-proprietor class; and the **Latgalian Christian Farmers**, led by Bishop Rancans and M. Kublinskis. The economic and political tenets of the three groups were practically identical; in foreign policy, however, the Peasant Union favoured, and the Latgalian Farmers opposed, closer relations with Poland, while in religious questions the Peasant Union was predominantly Lutheran, and the Latgalian Farmers purely Roman Catholic.

Although the combined parliamentary strength of the Agrarian *bloc* was, until 1931, considerably inferior to that of the Left, its actual preponderance is demonstrated by the fact that out of the eighteen Prime Ministers who held office between 1918 and 1934, thirteen were members of the Peasant Union, and one of the New Farmers' Party; while there were but two Governments—those of M. Zamuelis in 1924 and M. Skujenieks in 1926–8—in which no Agrarian party participated. Moreover, the Peasant Union has provided the majority of Latvia's prominent leaders: men like M. Ulmanis—eight times Prime Minister, and present Dictator and President of the State; M. Čakste, President of the State from 1922 until his death in 1927; M. Kviesis, President from 1930 to 1936; MM. Meierovics, Pauluks, Celmins, and Alberings, all former Prime Ministers; M. Klive and General Balodis. 665 643

Of the Centre groups, the most important was the **Democratic Centre party**, representing the professional and middle classes, led by M. Zemgals (President of the State from 1927 to 1930) and by MM. Zamuelis and Juraševskis (Prime Ministers in 1924 and 1928 respectively). In 1929 the Centre was reinforced by M. Skujenieks' Right Social-Democratic party, which moved over from the Left and took the name of the **Progressive Union**. M. Skujenieks had already held the office of Prime Minister from December 1926 to January 1928, and from May 1931 to February 1933 he headed a bourgeois-nationalist coalition notable for its attempts to curtail the rights of the national minorities. On the Right, the **Christian-** 665

665 Nationalists deserve special mention, as representing the interests of the Lutheran Church.

On the left, the Social-Democratic party, which had its origin in an amalgamation of various nationalist organizations in 1904, and which before the War had been an autonomous section of the Russian Social-Democratic movement, represented the working classes and trade unions, and was affiliated to the Second International. In economic affairs it opposed the Agrarians' protectionist policy and the compensation of expropriated landlords, and in foreign policy inclined towards closer relations with the U.S.S.R., while opposing any *rapprochement* with Poland or Germany; it was also antagonistic towards the national minorities and particularly to the Germans. In the Constituent Assembly the Left had formed a single group with fifty-seven seats, but with the elections to the first *Saeima* a process of splitting into small groups began.[1] The Social-Democrats took part in only three Governments: from the first, M. Pauluks' Agrarian-Left-Centre Cabinet of 1923, they were obliged to withdraw owing to a clash between Fascist and Socialist organizations which led to street fighting; the second, M. Zamuelis' Left-Centre Coalition of January–December 1924, resigned as an indirect result of the Communist *putsch* in Estonia; while the third, M. Skujenieks' Coalition of Left and Centre parties, resigned a year later, owing to the unpopularity of the Latvian-Soviet Trade Agreement. Throughout 1929 and 1930 they were in violent opposition to the second Celmins Government, particularly in the matter of the treatment of the German minority,[2] and they declined to co-operate in M. Skujenieks' second Cabinet of May 1931–March 1933. The Socialist leaders included Fr. Vesmanis and Dr. Kalnins (Speakers of the *Saeima* in 1922–5 and 1925–8), and MM. Bastjanis, Cielens, and Celms.

No legal Communist party existed, and an extreme radical group which appeared in the third *Saeima* was dissolved by the Supreme Court in the autumn of 1933, and its seven deputies were arrested on a charge of treason.

668 *The Dictatorship.* Signs of Fascism appeared quite early in Latvia; in 1927, when a nationalist club known as the Latvian Fascists was suspected of preparing an anti-Communist *putsch*, the Government of the day, M. Skujenieks' Left-Centre coalition, authorized the organization of the Social-Democratic 'Workers' Sports League' as an auxiliary corps, and assisted it in the purchase of arms; later in the year a group of officers made an unsuccessful attempt to organize a military *putsch* as a protest against the Latvian-Soviet Trade Agree-
665 ment. In 1932 a National-Socialist party was formed, apparently unconnected with the German Nazi party, but anti-semitic in

[1] See table of election results, p. 52. [2] See pp. 24-5.

tendency, and sympathetically regarded by the German minority. 665
There was also an extreme nationalist and Fascist organization known as the **Pehr Konkrusts Society**, while the **Aizsargi**, the para-military organization of the Peasant Union, was also becoming increasingly Fascist in tendency.

In 1933 began a struggle between the Socialists on the one hand, 578
and M. Blodnieks' Agrarian-Right-Centre coalition on the other, 665
which ended in the *coup* of May 1934. In August 1933 an extraordinary session of the *Saeima*, summoned on the Socialist party's initiative, rejected a Socialist Bill for the dissolution of all Fascist organizations, the dismissal of Fascist officials, and the expulsion of German Nazis from the country.[1] On the other hand, the *Saeima* also rejected a proposal to send to committee a Bill tabled by the Peasant Union in October, which would have enlarged considerably the powers of the President of the State. On March 2, 1934, the Blodnieks Government fell as a result of a disagreement between the Peasant Union and the New Farmers over financial policy, and M. Ulmanis, the leader of the Peasant Union, formed a coalition of his own party, the bourgeois parties of the Right and Centre, and most of the minority groups.

Shortly after the *Saeima* had voted for the dismissal of all Nazi 661
or Fascist officials employed by the Administration or by local 578
government bodies, M. Ulmanis proclaimed a state of emergency on May 15, and ordered the dissolution of the *Saeima*, the cessation of all party activities, and the imposition of martial law for six months.[2] A strict censorship of the press was established and troops were stationed in various parts of Riga. A Government manifesto gave as justification for these measures the fear lest the internal tension due to the interminable party conflicts, and the failure of the Peasant Union's proposal for constitutional reform, should lead to a state of civil war. A new Government, alleged to be non-party and to consist of experts, was formed on May 17, with M. Ulmanis as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister,[3] and General Balodis as Minister for War. All municipal councils were suspended, and new mayors appointed.

The chief victims of the *coup* were the Socialists, a number of who 661
leaders were arrested on charges of possessing illicit arms,[4] although i

[1] In the autumn, however, the Government did forbid the wearing of uniforms b political organizations, and dissolved all athletic associations within these organizations, including the 'Workers' Sporting Club'. [2] It was later prolonged indefinitely.
[3] In July 1936 M. Munters was appointed Foreign Minister.
[4] In the court martial held on these men in November Dr. Kalnins (formerly Speaker of the *Saeima*) was acquitted, but his son, Bruno, the leader of the 'Workers' Sports League', was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. A further trial of Socialists was held in April 1936 on charges of organizing an illegal revolutionary movement called the Socialist Labour and Peasant Party.

661 June certain leaders of the extreme Fascist organizations, including the Pehr Konkrusta Society, were also arrested, while in October a number of Lettish Germans and a few German nationals belonging to the Baltic Brotherhood—a society working for the absorption of the Baltic States by Germany—were sentenced to short terms of imprisonment.

642 The Government had announced in 1934 that it would draft constitutional reforms, curtailing the power of the *Saeima* and increasing those of the President, who, by an Army Law of January 1, 1935, was appointed the supreme chief of all the armed forces. On March 19, 1936, a law was issued providing that on the expiry of President Kviesis's second term of office on April 11, M. Ulmanis [475] should become acting President until the completion of the constitutional reform. Meanwhile, preparations were in train for an entirely new constitution on corporative lines; in January 1936 a law was promulgated creating a national economic council, consisting of representatives of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture, Labour, and Artisans, to deal in an advisory capacity with questions submitted to it by the Government. The Council did not meet, however, until January 1938; nor was martial law allowed to lapse until the following February, when it was replaced by a new 'Law for the Defence of the State', giving extraordinary powers to the Minister of the Interior with regard to the press, the liberty of the subject, and the rights of association and assembly.

4. Lithuania

● 665 *Political Parties.* From November 1918 to June 1926, political life in Lithuania was dominated by the nationalist and clerical **Christian-Democratic Party**,[1] which was founded in 1890, and which,

[1] Table 10. *Lithuanian Election Results, 1920–38.*

Parties	*Constituent Assembly 1920–2*	*1st Seimas 1922–3*	*2nd Seimas 1923–6*	*3rd Seimas 1926–7*	*4th Seimas 1936*
Christian-Democrats	59	15	14	14	..
Peasant Union		12	14	11	..
Federation of Labour		11	12	5	..
Populists	29	19	16	22	..
Social-Democrats	14	11	9	15	..
Communists	..	5	..	..	..
Farmers' Party	..	..	..	2	..
Nationalists	..	..	..	3	46
Minorities:					
Jews	6	3	6	3	..
Poles	3	2	11	4	..
Russians	..	..	1	..	..
Germans	1	..	2	6	3
Total	112	78	85	85	49

while it consisted mainly of peasants, included voters of all classes, as well as a great number of Roman Catholic clergy. Although anti-Communist in social policy, it was moderately democratic, and supported the agrarian reforms—while defending private property and the compensation of expropriated landlords—and the workers' right to organize and to strike. In foreign policy it was extremely anti-Polish; apart from its nationalist aims, its chief concern was the protection of religious interests. Its leaders included M. Bistras, Dr. Karvelis, and Father Krupavičius. Closely allied with the Christian-Democrats, and acting with them until 1926 as a single parliamentary *bloc*, were the **Peasant Union**, led by MM. Stulginskis, Mikšys, and Petrulis, and the **Federation of Labour** (founded in 1919), both of which were originally off-shoots designed to draw into the Christian-Democratic party the representatives of all classes of voters. The **Federation of Labour**, which counted among its leaders Drs. Ambrozaitis and Milčius, and MM. Radzevičius and Kasakaitis, was composed of non-Socialist workers and a number of small land-owners and new settlers. 665 ●

The six Cabinets formed between the promulgation of the Constitution in 1922 and the elections of May 1926 were composed, without exception, of members of these three parties; and during this period the veteran leader of the Peasant Union, M. Stulginskis, held the office of President of the State. In March 1923 M. Galvanauskas (non-party), who had been Prime Minister since 1922, resigned, feeling that a realignment of forces had taken place now that the Constitution and the agrarian reform had ceased to be the main issue, and the *Seimas* was prematurely dissolved by the President; but the second *Seimas* differed very little in composition from its predecessor. M. Stulginskis was re-elected President, and M. Galvanauskas's fourth Ministry was followed by those of MM. Tumėnas (Christian-Democrat), Petrulis (Christian-Democrat), and Bistras (Peasant Union). In May 1926 the natural term of the second *Seimas* expired, and in the subsequent elections the Christian-Democrats suffered a severe defeat, due partly to their inability to prevent the Vatican from concluding a Concordat with Poland, whereby Vilna was recognized as a Polish diocese, partly to the corrupt practices of the party itself, which had filled public offices wherever possible with its own nominees, and partly to the prevailing economic depression. 642 665

A coalition of **Populists** and **Social-Democrats** under the Populist leader, M. Sleževičius, now took office, and Dr. Grinius, also a Populist, was elected President. The **Populist**, or **People's Socialist party**, the largest single group in the *Seimas*, which had started life in 1902 as the Lithuanian Democratic party, drew its membership from much the same classes as did the Christian- 665

665 Democrats, and shared their nationalist and social policies, while being absolutely opposed to their views of the part that religious interests should play in politics. The Social-Democrats, led by M. Kairys and Professor Čepinskis, were also a nationalist group of pre-War origin, affiliated with the Second International, and with a constitutional programme which included the nationalization of banking and industry.[1]

642 665 Within six months, however, this Cabinet of the Left-Centre was brought to an untimely end; although relatively successful in foreign policy—a Treaty of Neutrality and Non-aggression was concluded with the U.S.S.R. on September 27, 1926—the Government roused opposition at home by the concessions which it was obliged to make to the national minority groups as a *quid pro quo* for their parliamentary support, by giving way to the Social-Democrats' demands that the public services should be purged of Christian-Democratic officials, and above all by its policy of allowing considerable latitude to Communist activity and propaganda. Moreover, the economic depression had not been alleviated, while the hopes of improved trade relations with Russia as a result of the new treaty had been disappointed. Finally, the Government's decision to cut down the army establishment, in compliance with the demands of a section of its supporters, seems to have alienated the officers' clubs.

The Voldemaras Dictatorship, 1926–9. The *coup d'état* executed on the night of December 16, 1926, by a number of officers including General Ladyga and Colonels Skorupskis, Plekavičius, and Grigaliunas, brought into power the Nationalist party, a small group of conservative landowners and industrialists led by MM. Smetona and Voldemaras, which had not appeared as a parliamentary group until the elections to the third *Seimas* in May 1926, when it returned only [661] three members. The Sleževičius Cabinet was now arrested and forced to resign; martial law was declared on the pretext of an imminent Communist *putsch*, and various public buildings were occupied by troops; and President Grinius was compelled to invite M. Voldemaras to form a new government, a task which the latter, with the support of a number of Christian-Democrats, accomplished in a single day. A Rump Parliament, consisting of only forty members of the Right, approved the resignation of President Grinius and of its Speaker, M. Staugaitis (Populist), and on December 19 elected M. Smetona President and passed a vote of confidence in the new Government.

M. Voldemaras proceeded to draft constitutional amendments which it was his original intention to submit to a popular referendum;

[1] The Communist party was illegal, and appeared in the first *Seimas* only, disguised as the 'Workers' Group'.

but the opposition from every quarter was so strong that he never actually did so. The remnant of the *Seimas* was dissolved on April 12, 1927, after a vote of no-confidence; but the Christian-Democrats insisted that any scheme for constitutional revision must be preceded by new elections to the *Seimas*, while the other parties threatened to boycott the scheme altogether. In May the Christian-Democratic members of the Cabinet resigned, and in June the whole party went into opposition. In the autumn, numbers of Social-Democratic and Populist leaders were thrown into prison, and many more fled to Vilna, where they organized an emigré Opposition movement; martial law and the press censorship were tightened up; and an unsuccessful attempt by a group of army officers, in November, to force M. Voldemaras to compromise with the Opposition only resulted in the dismissal of the Commander-in-Chief. Early in 1928 several more Christian-Democrats were imprisoned, and in May the last of the non-nationalist Government parties, the Labour Federation, withdrew its support.

Finally, on May 15, 1928, the new Constitution was promulgated without the Opposition's consent. It provided that the President, who would be elected for a seven-year term by a college of representatives of the whole nation, should have the power to dissolve the *Seimas* and issue decrees when it was not in session; that laws should be drafted by a State Council, and that a three-fifths vote should be required for a vote of no-confidence in the Cabinet;[1] it was to come into force immediately, but was to be ratified within the next ten years. Its publication made singularly little difference to the situation, however, as the Nationalists continued to govern without summoning the *Seimas* for the next eight years.[2]

By April 1929, when the Social-Democratic party was suppressed by decree, the prisons were full of the leaders of all parties, while M. Voldemaras was organizing nationalist societies (such as the 'Iron Wolf' and the 'Sharpshooters') into a kind of Fascist Militia, in the hope of undermining the influence of the officers' clubs which had brought him to power. Finally, soon after an abortive attempt to assassinate him in May, he quarrelled with President Smetona and the rest of his colleagues, who attacked his policy in general, and in particular the violently anti-Polish attitude which he had adopted in the Vilna dispute at the League Council. In view of the waning

[1] Other reforms included the reduction of the number of deputies, the raising of the age qualification for the franchise to twenty-four years, and the extension of the *Seimas*'s term to five years; it was also proposed to amend the Electoral Law so as to allow majority voting for individual candidates.

[2] In September 1928, during one of M. Voldemaras's absences in Geneva, the President ventured to promulgate a law setting up the Council of State prescribed by the Constitution, but it seems to have faded into the background when the Prime Minister returned.

661 support of the Army and of the President, he was obliged to resign his post on September 19, and, although he subsequently made several attempts to seize the reins again,[1] he never succeeded in doing so.

642 *The Tubelis Administration, 1929–1938.* President Smetona now invited his brother-in-law, M. Tubelis, to form a Cabinet which, with certain alterations, has remained in office to this day; M. Zaunius became Foreign Minister, while M. Rusteika retained the post of Minister of the Interior which he had held under M. Voldemaras. For a time the prospects of a return to normal political life seemed brighter. Political prisoners were released and dismissed officials reinstated; party leaders who had gone into voluntary rustication returned to the capital; in December 1929 even the ban on the Social-Democratic party was raised, although the press censorship was [666] strictly maintained. The first provincial and municipal elections since the *coup* were held in June 1931,[2] and on December 11 an electoral college, chosen by district assemblies of the new local government bodies, met to re-elect M. Smetona as President for a term of seven years.

661 Opposition to the Tubelis Government steadily accumulated, how-
● 665 ever, on all sides. The persecution of the Social-Democrats continued,
578 and by 1932 the last of the trade unions was dissolved; there was also friction, from 1931 onwards, between the Government on the one hand, and the Christian-Democrats, morally supported by the Vatican, on the other;[3] and in November 1935 both the Christian-Democratic and the Populist parties were dissolved by a decree which was confirmed and extended to all Opposition parties in February 1936. The unsuccessful attempts to stage the return of M. Voldemaras, made by small groups of officers in June 1934[4] and in January 1936, bore witness to a certain amount of disaffection in the Army. [468] More serious were the peasant strikes which broke out in the Suvalki district in August 1935 and the spring of 1936, and the workers' demonstration and strike in Kaunas in June 1936, when the troops had to be called out, and a state of siege was proclaimed in the city.

000 The reshuffle of the Cabinet in September 1936, when new appoint-

[1] In consequence of a series of intrigues he was banished to the country in July 1930, and the 'Iron Wolf' was dissolved in the following August. He was tried and acquitted on a charge of conspiracy in August 1931, and on a charge of misappropriation of funds in September 1932. After the failure of a *putsch*, organized by certain Army officers in June 1934, owing to the loyalty of the majority of the Army and to President Smetona's refusal to negotiate with the insurgents, M. Voldemaras was sentenced by court martial to twelve years' penal servitude on charges of high treason and of accepting assistance from a foreign Power (i.e. Germany). In February 1938 he was granted an amnesty, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Lithuania's independence.

[2] They were boycotted by the Opposition parties, however, on account of certain restrictions on the franchise.

[3] See above, p. 40. [4] See footnote above.

645 The reshuffle of the Cabinet in September 1936, when new appointments were made to the Ministries of Agriculture and of the Interior, was presumably the direct result of these disturbances, although M. Tubelis repudiated any connexion between the two circumstances.

666 As early as December 1933, President Smetona had foreshadowed the institution of a non-party parliament elected on a corporative basis, but—owing, probably, to the peasant disturbances—the elections to the new *Seimas*, which had been fixed for September 1935, were postponed until June 1936. A new Electoral Law was then published providing for the nomination of candidates by the district and municipal councils instead of by the parties (except in the case of Memel), reducing the number of deputies to forty-nine, and ordaining that votes should be cast for individuals instead of lists. Two seats were allotted to the Jewish minority,[1] and one to the Poles, but none to the German or Russian minorities. Out of a total electorate of 1,136,067, 775,951 (i.e. 68 per cent.) went to the polls; the majority of the deputies returned were either landowners or agricultural experts.

642 663 After nearly ten years of non-parliamentary administration, President Smetona summoned the *Seimas* on September 1, 1936, and stated that its task would be to prepare a draft reform of the 1928 Constitution, which was due to expire in 1938, on a corporative and nationalist basis. Meanwhile, the Nationalist party itself had already undergone a reorganization on Nazi lines in 1933, with the substitution of the *Führer* principle for the elective system, and the proclamation of M. Smetona as its supreme head; while, in 1935, it was decided to unite in a common front all the existing patriotic organizations, including the non-political Lithuanian Militia.

642 Finally, in February 1938, the twentieth anniversary of the proclamation of Lithuania's independence was celebrated by the issue of an amnesty to numerous political prisoners (including M. Voldemaras), and by the *Seimas's* adoption of a new constitution. Although the latter was promulgated on May 12, at the time of writing details of its provisions were not available. It was understood, however, to provide for a single Chamber Diet elected for five years by universal, secret, equal, and direct suffrage,[2] and for a Head of the State with wide powers elected for a seven-year term by delegates of the nation. Vilna was once more declared to be the capital of Lithuania.

The crisis of the following March, when Lithuania was obliged to yield to the Polish ultimatum of the 17th, demanding the renewal

[1] The Jewish candidates failed to obtain the requisite minimum of votes.

[2] Rules relating to the presentation of candidates, however, were to be determined by a special law.

Ba. 167 S.U. 563 Russia proper. It started at the beginning of the nineteenth century when the population of entire villages left their homes after an unsuccessful revolt against the German Baltic barons. In the second half, and particularly in the last few years of the nineteenth century, a new wave of Latvian and Estonian peasant immigrants came to Russia proper, but in the twentieth century the Baltic immigration changed its character. The 1905 Revolution was particularly violent in Latvia and many revolutionary Latvian workers fled to Russia to escape the vengeance of the German landowners. In the years 1919–21, after the collapse of the first Soviet Latvia, about 60,000 to 70,000 Latvian communists and their sympathizers settled down in Soviet Russia. In the same period a number of Latvian and Estonian agricultural colonists left their Russian homes and went to the newly established Baltic 'bourgeois Republics', but the bulk of the colonists remained in Russia, even under the Soviet régime.

Ba. 167 361 The two main centres of Estonian and Latvian immigration in Russia were the Western border areas near the Estonian and Latvian state frontiers and Western Siberia. More than half of all the Estonians of the U.S.S.R. – 75,000 to be exact – lived in the Western part of that administrative area which originally formed the Leningrad Province, but which later was subdivided into the Provinces of Leningrad and Pskov. Many of the Estonians of the Leningrad Province who were organized into 123 collective farms and had 90 national schools at their disposal had settled down in the nearest vicinity of 'bourgeois Estonia'. Some inhabited villages on the left bank of Lake Peipus which separates Estonia from the U.S.S.R.[23] One of the Soviet border territories comprising an Estonian minority was given the name of the Estonian communist leader, Victor Kingisepp (1888–1922), who was executed by the Estonian 'counter-revolution'. The Kingisepp District was, however, no autonomous Estonian area.

The much smaller community of Latvian peasant colonists of the Leningrad Province had twenty-six National Collective Farms and twenty-one national schools.[24] The real strength of the Latvian ethnical group in the Soviet Union lay in the existence of strong and well-organized colonies in numerous Soviet cities such as Leningrad, Moscow, Kharkov, Dniepropetrovsk, Vitebsk and Smolensk. A 'Foreign Bureau of the Latvian Communist Party' co-ordinated the activities of these colonies and a cultural organization, 'Prometei', catered for their intellectual welfare. 'Prometei' was in charge of three Latvian theatres in Moscow, Smolensk and Leningrad. It had a publishing house of its own which printed communist propaganda literature as well as Latvian translations of Soviet authors and Russian classics.[25] The Soviet Latvians also had two daily newspapers, one published in Leningrad, the other in Novosibirsk and there existed special Latvian children's magazines, Komsomol publications and a Latvian library and art review.[26]

Ba. 658 625

magazines, Komsomol publications and a Latvian literary and art review.[26]

Individual Latvians and Estonians were serving the Soviet Union in different ways long before their respective countries were compelled to place at the disposal of the U.S.S.R. the whole of their economic assets, natural riches and manpower. Latvians and Estonians gave the Soviet régime not only industrious collective farmers and skilled workers, but also high ranking party and administrative officials, diplomats and G.P.U. agents. The influence exercised by the small Baltic minorities of the Soviet Union during the inter-war period becomes understandable if we bear in mind that they had the highest percentage of Communist Party members of all Soviet nationalities. Thus in 1927, 12,198 Latvians or 8·98 per cent of the entire Latvian minority were party members, while the 2,577 Lithuanian and the 3,682 Estonian communists accounted for 6·2 per cent and 2·38 per cent, respectively, of their national minorities in the U.S.S.R. The importance of these figures can be assessed more properly if we bear in mind that only 0·88 per cent of all Russians and 0·39 per cent of all Ukrainians were organized in the Communist Party at that time.[27]

The Latvian communists, who had played an outstanding part in the Civil War in the fighting for Petrograd, Moscow and Kazan, had earned the reputation of particular reliability. For a long time they enjoyed preferential treatment and were given many important key positions unattainable by other much more numerous nationalities of the Soviet Union. The most prominent Latvian in Soviet politics was Yan Ernestovich Rudzutak, member of the Politbureau of the All-Union Communist Party, Vice-Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissars from 1926 and in this capacity in supreme charge of Russian economic reconstruction. Rudzutak, who had survived several purges, was executed in 1937. Another influential Latvian was Robert Petrovich Eideman, President of the Osoaviakhim, the Soviet A.R.P. organization. He too was executed for treason together with Marshal Tukhachevsky. The nine judges passing the death sentence on Tukhachevsky, Eideman, etc., also included a Latvian, General Alksnis, organizer and commander of the Russian air force. Early in 1938 he was himself removed from office and jailed. The list of outstanding 'Soviet Latvians' of the period between the wars would be incomplete without the mentioning of Robert Indrikovich Eikhe. For over ten years he was the ruler of Western Siberia, at first as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Siberian Territory (Sibkray), and after 1929 as First Secretary of the West Siberian party organization. In 1935 he became an alternate member of the Bolshevik Politbureau. He also did not survive the big purge.

The Baltic refugees in the Soviet Union not only occupied important

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
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sities therein. These aims were most easily realized in the case of the Lithuanians, ample material being provided for their anti-German past by their struggle against the Teutonic Knights and above all by the Battle of Tannenberg (1410) when Lithuanians and Russians had fought on the same side.

In Latvia, Soviet authorities used for their own purposes the legend of the national hero, Lachplesis, fighting against the 'Black Knight'. According to the war-time interpretation of the legend, Lachplesis was a kind of guerilla leader who defeated the Germans; in the post-war period he appeared as the personification of the victorious Soviet power asserting itself against the forces of darkness and reaction. In Estonia, the Soviet régime made similar use of Kalev, the hero of the national epic, *Kalevipoeg*, whom Soviet propaganda represented as the champion of Russian-Estonian co-operation. This interpretation is based on a reference in the epic to a bridge which Kalev began to build across the Lake Peipus.

Soviet policy in the Baltic States can be characterized not only by the familiar official slogan, 'National in form, socialist in content', but also by the formula 'Baltic in form, Russian in essence'. Particularly since 1945 the Soviet régime has treated the Baltic States not only as Soviet provinces but also as part of the Russian living space. The influx of Russians into the Baltic Republics is important both in quantity and in quality. The Soviet Government has not been so clumsy as to appoint Russians to such posts as those of the Prime Ministers of the Baltic Republics or of the chairmen of the local Supreme Soviets. Even the first party secretaries are natives of the countries concerned. By a coincidence, however, their deputies are Russians in all three republics and there are many more Russians in responsible and influential party positions. Moscow also sent administrators, economic experts and skilled workers. On the other hand, the Baltic communists were unable to acquire any important posts in Moscow. After the annexation of the Baltic Republics the leaders of the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian communists were not admitted into the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, but became only alternate members of that body.

The Russians not only occupied important key positions in the Baltic Republics as individuals but also assumed the status of a second State-nation in each. Russian was introduced as a State language on the same footing as Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian, and in the new coats of arms of the three Soviet Republics the motto, 'Workers of the World Unite', appeared in both the local and the Russian languages.